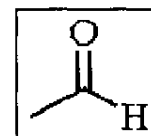
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Acetaldehyde



[75-07-0] · C₂H₄O · Acetaldehyde · (MW 44.05)

(reagent used as two-carbon electrophilic component in a wide array

Physical Data: mp -123.5 °C; bp 21 °C; *d* 0.788 g cm⁻³.

Solubility: sol H₂O, alcohol, ether, and most organic solvents.

Form Supplied in: colorless liquid; widely available.

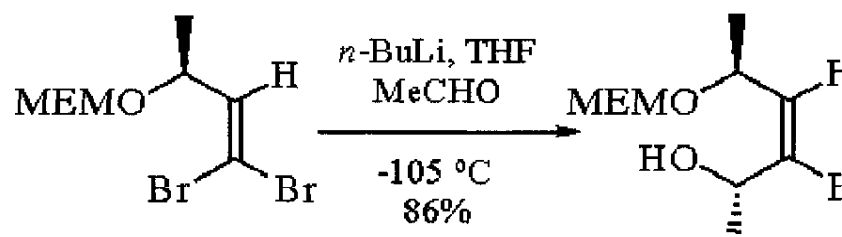
Purification: shaken with powdered NaHCO₃ for 30 min; dried over 760 mmHg through a 70 mm Vigreux column.

Handling, Storage, and Precautions: bottles may develop pressure as
To help prevent polymerization and autoxidation, store under nitrogen
Acetaldehyde is a cancer suspect agent and should be used only in a
(oral) rat LD₅₀: 661 mg kg⁻¹. Incompatible with strong acids, strong
Decomposes on prolonged exposure to air.

1,2-Additions.

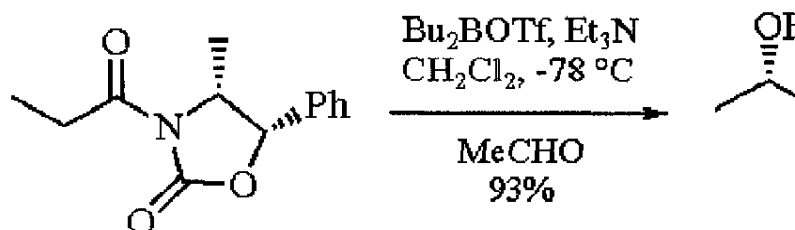
Acetaldehyde reacts with a myriad of nucleophilic reagents, generally two-carbon extended secondary alcohols. Aryl-,¹ alkynyl-,² and alky acetaldehyde even at low temperature. A chiral vinylolithium reagent stereoselectively to afford a 10:1 mixture of diastereomeric alcohols reagents behave in an analogous manner with acetaldehyde to give the ketones⁷ upon subsequent oxidation. Allyl organometallics react with

depending on the metal and conditions to give the corresponding homoallylboronates also react with acetaldehyde at $-78\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ to afford the homoallylboronates with high enantioselectivity.⁹ *trans*-Epoxides are produced selectively through acetaldehyde with halomethyl sulfones under basic phase transfer conditions.¹⁰ *trans*-Epoxides are produced selectively through acetaldehyde with halomethyl sulfones under basic phase transfer conditions.¹¹ and Horner-Emmons phosphonate¹² ylides react with acetaldehyde to give α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compounds.



Aldol Additions.

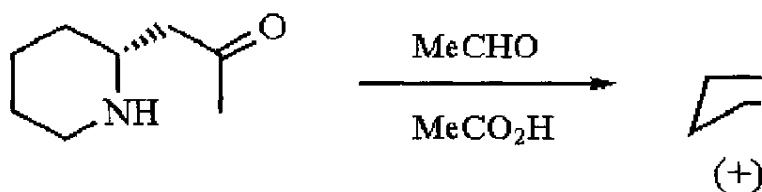
Acetaldehyde serves as an electrophilic partner in the aldol condensation. The Knoevenagel condensation of acetaldehyde with active methylene compounds provides good yields of the ethylidene substituted compounds.¹⁴ Active methylene compound to acetaldehyde results in a Michael addition of the initially formed ethylidene.¹⁵ Tollens reaction of acetaldehyde with formaldehyde gives pentaerythritol.¹⁶ The addition of acetaldehyde in a Baylis-Hillman reaction using *1,4-Diazabicyclo[2.2.2]octane* (DABCO) as catalyst gives a 90% yield of the α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compound.¹⁷ The stereoselective aldol reaction of acetaldehyde with achiral¹⁸ and chiral¹⁹ aldehydes has received much attention and is a proven method for controlling acyclic relative stereochemistry. For example, the boron enolate of a norephedrine-derived propionyl boronate to afford in 90% yield and >98% de the *syn* aldol product (eq 2).^{19a} The boron enolate of a norephedrine-derived propionyl boronate undergoes nitro-aldol condensation to the corresponding nitro alcohol.²⁰ A variety of heterocycles react with acetaldehyde to give good yields of aldol products: zinc,²² copper,²³ and boron²⁴ enolates of esters and ketones provide



Mannich and Mannich-Type Reactions.

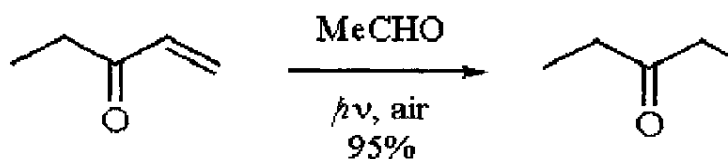
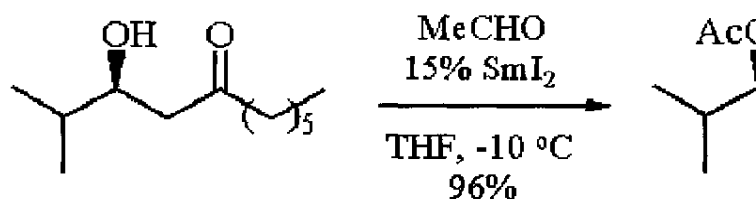
Although not as commonly used as *Formaldehyde*, acetaldehyde undergoes Mannich-type reactions with secondary amines and aldehydes to form Mannich bases.

Mannich reactions. Intramolecular Mannich reaction of acetaldehyde natural product myrtine (eq 3).²⁵ The intramolecular Mannich reaction synthesis of proline derivatives.²⁶ Nucleophiles as diverse as dialkyl radicals²⁹ may also add to the intermediate imine of acetaldehyde in historically significant reaction of acetaldehyde in this mode is the St. cyanide is added to the adduct of ammonia and acetaldehyde followed by α -aminonitrile.³⁰ The Pictet-Spengler reaction utilizing acetaldehyde reaction. Acetaldehyde has been extensively used in the synthesis of tryptophan derivatives through this cyclization.³¹ Other ring systems: tetrahydroisoquinolines³² and dihydrooxazines³³ have also been formed by cyclization with acetaldehyde.



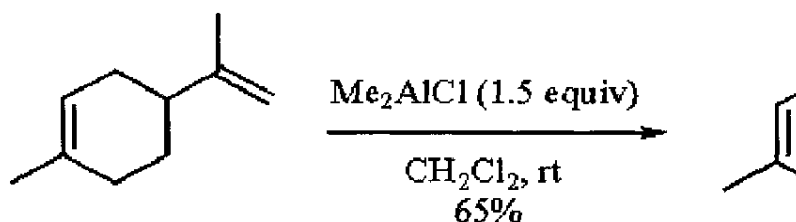
Metal and Other Promoted Condensations.

In the mixed Tishchenko reaction using *Aluminum Isopropoxide* as predominately the oxidized partner. Thus when condensed with benzaldehyde, benzoin is the major product.³⁴ Recently an interesting and synthetically useful stereoselective Tishchenko reduction of β -hydroxy ketones using acetaldehyde and $\text{Al}(\text{O}i\text{Pr})_3$ affording *anti*-1,3-diol monoacetates, has been reported (eq 4).³⁵ The coupling of acetaldehyde with other higher-order aldehydes that contain α,β -unsaturated esters and ketones has been achieved using a vanadium(II) reagent.³⁶ The photochemical addition of acetaldehyde in the presence of molecular oxygen to α,β -unsaturated esters and ketones to form 1,3-dicarbonyl compounds (eq 5).³⁷



Pericyclic Reactions.

The thermal ene reactions of acetaldehyde and other aliphatic aldehydes are very productive.³⁸ However, acetaldehyde can be induced to undergo reactions with alkenes under Lewis acid activation. **Dimethylaluminum Chloride** has been used in the reaction between the relatively reactive 1,1-di-, tri-, and tetrasubstituted alkenes and unreactive monosubstituted terminal alkenes, the more Lewis acidic **Me₂AlCl** is employed to obtain reasonable yields of ene products with acetaldehyde as the unreactive dieneophile towards dienes. The hetero-Diels-Alder reaction has been reported under high pressure acceleration with 1-alkoxydienes to afford products with modest *endo* selectivity.⁴¹



Paraldehyde and Other Acetaldehyde Derivatives

Paraldehyde has historically been used as a stable and less volatile form of acetaldehyde for a variety of chemical reactions.⁴² However, since its classification as a control substance, its availability has led to its limited use in modern synthetic organic chemistry. It can be generated from paraldehyde through acid catalyzed degradation of the polymer followed by distillation.⁴³ The diethyl acetal of acetaldehyde, commonly known as 1,3-dioxane, is formed from acetaldehyde or paraldehyde, ethanol, and calcium chloride.⁴⁴ Acetaldehyde has been used for the protection of diols as their ethylidene acetals.⁴⁵

Related Reagents.

Acetaldehyde N-t-Butylimine; Acetaldoxime; Crotonaldehyde; Dimethylacetal; Vinyl Ether; Formaldehyde; Formaldehyde-Dimethylamine; Vinyl

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